

Continuing the Iowa Tradition



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By Jeff Vonk, Director
Iowa Department of Natural
Resources

The changing of the seasons
holds special memories for me.

It brings back times I have spent
with friends and family, that gobbler strutting in, the
sack full of fish on a warm summer night, the buck that
snorted just below me. **That is our heritage.**

I challenge you to ask your father, mother, or
grandfather what they like to do when they are outside
in the woods, lakes, prairies, and parks. I bet you'll be
surprised at their answers. Find out what their earliest
hunting or fishing memories are and ask if they can re-
create those times with you. **That is our heritage.**

This newsletter is for you if you are interested in
outdoor activities with your family, what kind of field
guides and binoculars are best, or what is the latest in
fishing and hunting techniques and gear. This
newsletter will be changed four times a year and can
be downloaded from www.iowadnr.com so check
back with us often.

Remember, have fun, be safe, and create
memories. **This is your heritage and the Iowa
Tradition.**

Shooting My Way To A Dream

By Hayley Dunn

Summer Olympic contender from Iowa, age 19

Hunting and shooting
have been a part of my life
since I was eight years old,
from hunting rabbits to
shooting sporting clays.
My dad Larry, opened
Steelclay Shooting Sports
when I was ten and now
has a game preserve for
pheasant, quail, and
chucker as well.

Hunting and shooting
sports have taught me
discipline, responsibility,
and respect for both wildlife and firearms. With that I
can safely have fun with both hunting and shooting.

Family has always been very important to me.
Shooting is something the whole family can join in on
as well as hunting. There is a lot of competition in
shooting and hunting sports. My 12-gauge Beretta
shotgun has taken me around the world to eleven
different countries for competition and hunting. I have
had the opportunity to go far in hunting and shooting
sports and so can you!



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The Eastern Wild Turkey

By Jim Coffey

Wildlife Bureau

As one of Iowa's most visible species, it is difficult to believe that this extraordinary animal was extinct from our state for over 50 years. The last wild turkey was documented in Iowa in the early 1900s.

Reintroduction of the wild turkey did not occur until the 1960s. The eastern wild turkey is now found across the state. Our diverse Iowa landscape is ideal for a turkey's life cycle. With Iowa's productive soil comes good healthy wildlife. An adult male turkey weighs 22-25 pounds while females are 14-16 pounds.

Turkeys are omnivores, meaning they eat plants, bugs, seeds, and meats. Their diet varies by season. They eat green blades of grass in the spring, insects in the summer, and acorns in the fall.

Nesting season is one of the most dangerous times for a turkey. Females lay eggs in a shallow depression nest on the ground. This makes them vulnerable to all kinds of predators. Some predators are looking for eggs (skunks, crows, snakes), others for the hen turkey (coyotes, dogs, goshawks). About eleven eggs are laid. Most of the eggs hatch. Half or fewer of the young turkeys (poults) make it through the summer.

Wild turkeys provide excitement to Iowa's landscape. Many people enjoy watching and hunting them. The easiest way to find a turkey is to look for their food. Turkeys scratch the ground with powerful legs. These areas are easily seen in forests in the fall. Also listen for the sounds of a turkey. They like to be around other turkeys. They call frequently to stay in contact with each other. Turkeys have terrific eyesight. They often hear or see you long before you know they are around. Be patient and quiet and you will have a good chance at seeing a wild turkey.

**Buy your hunting and fishing licenses
on-line at www.iowadnr.com.**

Resident Hunting – \$17.50

Habitat Fee (16 years – 65 years) – \$8.50

Turkey License – \$23.00

Year fishing license – \$17.50

7-day fishing license – \$12.00

24-hour fishing license – \$8.00

Turkey Hunting For Beginners

By Michelle Wilson

Coordination and Policy Section

Turkey hunting is exciting! I will never forget the first time I was out with my Dad and I had a gobbler (adult male turkey) come into the open grass in front of me with his tail feathers fanned out wide strutting. It was so much fun to watch I didn't even get my gun up at first, but my dad was there coaching me along to help me take my first turkey home.

If turkey hunting is new to you and your family, attend a turkey hunting seminar or check out some books or videos to learn the basic tips and techniques.

You don't need a lot of tools and calls. Start with a box call, slate call, or diaphragm call. Learn one call before you buy another. Most calls come with tapes that show you how to use them and make the yelping, purring, and gobble calls like a turkey.



slate call



diaphragm call

Turkeys notice colors. Wear lots of camouflage, including a face mask. NEVER wear or carry anything red, white, or blue. A gobbler's neck shows these colors during their strut. You don't want another hunter to mistake you for a turkey. Put on a blaze orange hat before you leave the woods at the end of the day. Since blaze orange is not found naturally in the wild, it is a good color to wear to keep you safe.

Leave your gun behind the first time you go hunting. Go out early and listen and watch. Get to know the woods you are in and the animals that live there. Discover where turkeys hang out in the day and roost at night. Look for signs of turkeys such as tracks or feathers. Try your calls to see what kind of response you get. With practice and time you will learn when to yelp, purr, or gobble.

Every good turkey hunter goes out at least once a spring to sit, listen, and watch. Things change a little every year. You want to be prepared so you too can take home your first turkey.



Summer Fishin'

Catching fish is fun and easy! All you need is a fishing pole, a few worms, some tackle, and a little patience. Grab a friend or family member, pack your

favorite snacks, and go fishing.

May and June are the best time to catch fish. They move to shallow areas close to shore to lay their eggs. They hang out near rocks, fallen trees, brush piles, and cattails or other plants along the shore. You can catch channel catfish in deeper water in the late evening when it gets hot in July and August. To learn more about your favorite fish, visit the DNR web site: www.iowadnr.com/fish/iafish/iafish.html.

Fish from docks or fishing jetties. Fish like to hide under these shaded areas, especially in the heat of the summer.

The best time of day to fish is sunrise or sunset. Fish move around less when it is hot. They eat in the morning or later evening.

Fishing Hot Spots

Below are a few hot spots. A current fishing report is available at www.iowadnr.com/news/currentfish.html. Check out www.iowadnr.com/fish/fishing/fishia.html for more information about lakes in your area.

Southwest Iowa

bluegill – Lake Ahquabi (Warren County)
channel catfish – Mormon Trail (Adair County)
crappie – Red Rock Reservoir (Marion County)

Southeast Iowa

bluegill – Lake Sugema (Van Buren County)
channel catfish – Lake Darling (Washington County)
crappie – Coralville Reservoir (Linn County)

Northwest/North-central Iowa

bluegill – Brushy Creek Lake (Webster County)
bullhead – Rice Lake (Winnebago County)
channel catfish – Boone River (Hamilton County)
crappie – Browns Lake (Woodbury County)

Northeast Iowa

bluegill – Casey Lake (Tama County);
channel catfish – Avenue of the Saints (Bremer County)
crappie – Lake Delhi (Delaware County)

Rigging Up

Fishing Poles

A cane pole or spincast rod is perfect for catching catfish, bullheads, bluegills, and crappies. Your pole should be about as long as you are tall.

Tackle and Bait

Start with worms and a bobber. Hook the worm through the body two or three times. Be careful - hooks are sharp. Nightcrawlers work great. Keep your worms in a closed container inside a cooler with ice. You can use the same cooler to keep the fish you catch fresh until you get home.



Bobbers keep your bait suspended off the bottom and where the fish are biting. They bob up and down when you have a bite.

Safety Tips

- Always bring along a basic first aid kit with sterile bandages, tape, antiseptic, band aids, aspirin, scissors, wire cutters, tweezers, analgesic cream, sunscreen, and insect repellent.
- Never fish alone. Ask an adult or friend to tag along.
- Wear a wide brim hat, sunglasses, and sturdy, comfortable shoes. Never walk around shore barefoot. Rocks and trash can cut or bruise your feet.
- Always wear a life jacket when fishing around deep or fast-moving water. Make sure it fits snugly and won't ride up around your face.

Fishing Licenses

If you are 16 years or older, you need a fishing license. Always carry your license when fishing. You can buy a license for the whole year, one week, or one day. Licenses are sold at several locations or on-line: www.iowadnr.com.



Natural Area Spotlight

Stephens State Forest

Stephens State Forest was named for Dr. T. C. Stephens, a prominent educator and Sioux City native. Located in south-central Iowa, the forest is divided into seven separate units totaling 14,112 acres.

It serves as an example of forest management for Iowa's citizens. It was a base of operations for the Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.) demonstration plantings of hardwoods (oak trees) and conifers (pine and spruce trees). Over the years, tree plantations have continued to be established. Foresters manage the forest to improve the production of forest products, wildlife habitat, erosion control, and watershed protection.

White tailed deer, fox and gray squirrels, raccoon, cottontail rabbits, woodchuck, muskrat, skunk, red and gray fox, coyote, beaver, opossum, and other small animals live in the forest.

A variety of birds live in woodlands and at their borders. Non-game birds such as nuthatches, cardinals, and owls as well as game birds such as pheasant, quail, and wild turkey live in Stephens State Forest.

The Lucas and Whitebreast units are southwest of Lucas. Both have two (4-5 acres each) ponds stocked with bluegill, largemouth bass, and catfish. There are equestrian campgrounds and trails so you can bring your horse along. Other recreation opportunities include picnicking, hunting, hiking, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing. The Woodburn Unit (south of Woodburn) has backpacking trails and campsites. For more information, visit www.iowadnr.com/forestry/stephens.html.



Outdoor Camps

Get outside this summer and try something new. Go swimming, canoeing, fishing, or camping. Several camps offer these and other outdoor activities including archery, rifle shooting, or muzzleloading.

Check with your local ISU Extension office, county conservation board, Boy or Girl Scouts, church group, YMCA, or Boys and Girls Club for a camp schedule.

The Department of Natural Resources sponsors overnight camps for boys and girls age 12-15 at the Springbrook Conservation Education Center near Guthrie Center. Call the person listed for more information.

- *Hunting and Conservation Camp for Boys* – June 7-9 or July 28-30, 2004; A. Jay Winter, (641) 747-8383 ext. 11
- *McMahon Ray Wildlife Camp* – June 10-11, 2004; George Hemmen, (712) 250-0061
- *Outdoor Journey for Girls* – June 23-25 or August 4-6, 2004; Stephanie Penniston, (563) 886-6095

Family Fishing Events

What to learn more about fishing? Attend a Family Fishing event. All but the Muscatine event are at state parks with one night of free camping.

Your whole family is invited to a fish fry. These events are mainly for 4-H members and clubs, but everyone is welcome. You must pre-register. Call the person listed below for more information.

June 5, 2004

Bushy Creek State Recreation Area
Linda Cline, (515) 576-2119

June 12, 2004

Weed Park, Muscatine
Becki Peterson, (563) 263-5701

June 26, 2004

Green Valley State Park
Sharon Wasteney, (641) 782-8426

June 26, 2004

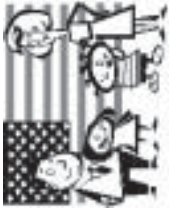
Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area
Stan Geiken, (319) 472-4739



June 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 Family Fishing Event - Brushy Creek State Rec. Area
6 Free Fishing Days in Iowa	7 Hunting & Conservation Camp for Boys at Springbrook Education Center, Guthrie Center ←	8 Hunting & Conservation Camp for Boys at Springbrook Education Center, Guthrie Center National Fishing & Boating Week (June 5-13)	9 Hunting & Conservation Camp for Boys at Springbrook Education Center, Guthrie Center →	10 McMahon Ray Wildlife Camp at Springbrook Conservation Education Center, Guthrie Center ←	11 Wildlife Camp at Springbrook Conservation Education Center, Guthrie Center →	12 Family Fishing Event - Weed Park, Muscatine
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Take your dad fishing, it's Father's Day!	21	22	23 Outdoor Journey for Girls at Springbrook Conservation Education Center, Guthrie Center ←	24 Outdoor Journey for Girls at Springbrook Conservation Education Center, Guthrie Center →	25 Girls Education Center, Guthrie Center →	26 Family Fishing Events - Green Valley Park & Pleasant Creek Rec. Area
27	28	29	30			

July 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
		Too hot to fish? You can still catch catfish after dark (fish deeper areas)!				
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Don't let the "Dog Days of Summer" get you down. Paddle a river - they usually are lower in mid-late summer.						
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
			Hunting & Conservation Camp for Boys at Springbrook Conservation Education Center, Guthrie Center			

My Nature Journal



Today's date is: _____ The time is: _____

What is the weather like?

What state park is this?

Who is with you?

What is special about this place? Record what you observe with sketches, pictures, words, seeds, leaves...anything! But don't remove or disturb any natural items that might be useful to the critters you are observing, like nests, feathers, and wildflowers...

Go On A Scavenger Hunt

Below is a list of things you will find in Iowa State Parks. Check off the ones you find in your state park today. Draw or take pictures of your adventure so you can remember the fun you had!

See:

___ Wildflowers

___ Dead tree

___ Blade of grass

___ Acorn or other nuts

___ Moss

___ Seeds or seed pod

___ Eroded soil

___ Animal tracks

___ Hole in a tree

___ Caterpillar

___ Squirrel

___ Birds nest

___ Ant

___ Butterfly or moth

___ Unusual shaped leaf

___ Beetle

___ Feather

Feel:

___ Tree bark

___ Prickly plant

___ Wet mud

___ Rotten wood

___ Wind blowing on face

___ Texture of rocks

Smell:

___ Pine tree

___ Flower

___ Mud

___ Green grass

___ Fresh air

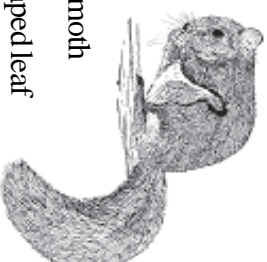
___ Cedar tree

Watch:

___ Ant moving something

___ Fish jumping

___ Stars in the sky





Create your own

NATURE JOURNAL

Quick! Can you answer these questions:



What birds did you see last week?



Can you describe one wildflower or tree blooming near your home?



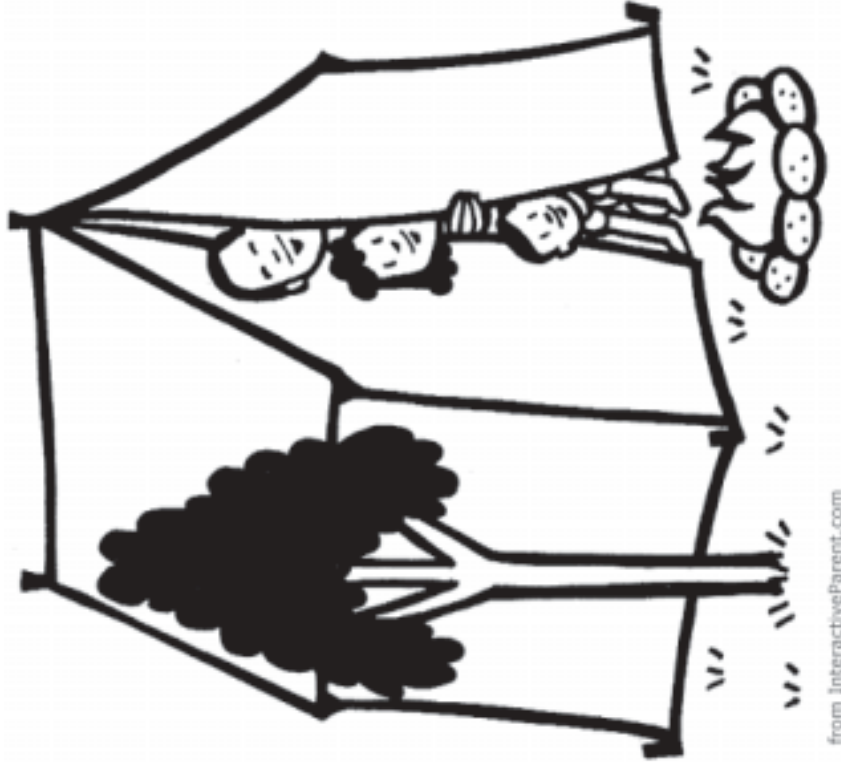
What have the animals that live near you been up to lately?

If you can, hooray! If you can't, that's okay. You can use a nature journal to describe neat things you see, hear, smell, and touch outdoors. It can also help you keep track of changes with the plants and animals around you.

You can keep a nature journal no matter where you are...in your backyard...in your schoolyard...in a park...looking out a window...anywhere!



Adapted from Ranger Rick® magazine and the National Wildlife Federation©



from InteractiveParent.com

If you had fun writing in this nature journal, buy a spiral notebook and make a special journal to preserve your memories or create a scrapbook to keep your adventures alive. Just remember to look, listen, feel, and have fun in nature!

(Fold on this line)